

Surry County Board of Commissioners
Meeting of February 23, 2018

The Surry County Board of Commissioners met on February 23, 2018 for a Planning Retreat. The meeting was held at JOLO Vineyards, Pilot Mountain, North Carolina.

Board members present for the meeting were Chairman Eddie Harris, Vice-Chairman Van Tucker, Commissioner Larry Johnson and Commissioner Larry Phillips.

Others present for the meeting, at various times, were:
Chris Knopf, County Manager
Conchita Atkins, Clerk to the Board
Sandy Snow, Assistant County Manager
Sarah Bowen, Finance Officer
Penny Harrison, Interim Tax Administrator
Rhonda Nixon, Internal Auditor
John Shelton, Emergency Services Director
Dennis Bledsoe, Public Works Director
Don Mitchell, Facilities Director
Sheriff Jimmy Combs
Chief Deputy Lauren Osborne
Randy Shelton, Sheriff's Office
DEC Associates, Financial Advisors
Wayne Sullivan Municipal Engineering
News Media

Chairman Harris called the meeting to order and called upon Commissioner Tucker to give the invocation and pledge.

Chairman Harris asked for approval of the agenda.

Upon motion of Commissioner Tucker, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Johnson thanked staff for their work on preparing retreat items.

Commissioner Phillips stated the County has come a long way since 2012 and has a lot more work to do.

Commissioner Tucker stated he appreciates County staff. Commissioner Tucker stated he enjoys serving the citizen of Surry County and is ready to move forward.

Chairman Harris stated the County has great staff. Chairman Harris stated he came on the Board eight years ago and issues have become more complex, but he is ready to tackle the issues.

Chairman Harris stated he will be sending the Republican Party Chairman a letter, in the near future, regarding the vacant seat of former Commissioner Golding.

Penny Harrison, Interim Tax Administrator, discussed property tax revenues and values. Ms. Harrison stated that

estimates versus actual has shown little increase due to the values for the Spencer's facility in Mount Airy. Ms. Harrison stated that business personnel property tax values are currently low. Ms. Harrison stated that collections are currently 98.64%. Ms. Harrison also discussed GAP motor vehicle billing. The GAP motor vehicle process will cover the months between the expiration of a vehicles' registration and the renewal of the registration or the issuance of a new registration. Ms. Harrison stated it is essential to know what fiscal year the billing took place. The GAP motor vehicle billing will need to be treated like a personal property tax bill which makes the bill due September 1st. Ms. Harrison stated she feels the best option is to bill once a year in the same fiscal year.

Ms. Harrison discussed the revaluation timeline.

Sarah Bowen, Finance Officer, discussed debt service, amount issued and the amounts owed each fiscal year. Ms. Bowen also discussed the schedule of quarterly sales and use tax and sales tax figures.

Ms. Bowen discussed a contract that was sent to outside agencies with their fiscal year budget letter for fiscal year 2019. The School of Government recommends that local governments have a contract in place with any non-profits that receive County funds.

Upon motion of Commissioner Tucker, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously for the Finance Officer to send contracts to non-profits, after budget adoption that receive County funds.

Ms. Bowen discussed a request for proposals for the selection of an audit firm for fiscal years 2018-2020. Ms. Bowen presented information regarding four firms who submitted proposals. Ms. Bowen recommended the County select Gould Killian for the County's audit, the Mount Airy/Surry County Airport Authority, Tourism Development Authority and the Flatrock Bannertown Water and Sewer.

Ms. Bowen discussed using Gibson and Company for the volunteer fire district compilations.

Ms. Bowen discussed entering a contract with Gould Killian for three-years with a clause that allows the County to back out after one-year if the County is unhappy with the service or quality of work.

Ms. Bowen discussed purchasing software that is uniform for each volunteer fire department. Ms. Bowen stated that each department utilizes different software for accounting purposes and each department needs to be on the same software. Ms. Bowen will research a software package for the volunteer fire departments accounting purposes.

Upon motion of Commissioner Phillips, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Finance Officer to enter a three-year contract with Gould Killian for audit services with the County with a clause that allows the County to back out after one-year if the County is unhappy with the service or quality of work. Ms. Bowen will

bring a software recommendation for use by the volunteer fire departments to the Board.

John Shelton, Emergency Services Director, addressed the Board regarding an additional EMS Crew as Medic 7. Mr. Shelton stated that in 2015, there were two quick response units staffed with critical medics in the Shoals and Beulah communities. The personnel to man the units were taken from an existing ambulance crew on each shift which dropped an ambulance on each shift. Ms. Shelton discussed times that ambulance units were out of service and wait times for patients needing transfers to resource hospitals. Mr. Shelton asked the Board to consider providing personnel to staff a seventh medic unit in the upcoming budget. Mr. Shelton discussed the following four options:

1. Pulling the four paramedic positions back from the Air-Care contract and hiring four paramedics to staff the seventh EMS crew. This option would require \$165,655 of funding within the 2018-2019 budget. EMS is being compensated approximately \$350,000.
2. Pulling four medics back from the Air-Care contract and hiring four EMT Advanced personnel that would not be certified as a critical care unit. This unit could provide advanced life support, but not critical care skills or treatment. This would require \$146,131 in funding with the 2018-2019 budget.
3. Keeping the Air-Care contract in place, and hiring eight EMT Advanced personnel, that could only provide certain advanced level skills within the system. This would require \$292,260 in funding within the 2018-2019 budget.
4. Keeping the Air-Care contract in place and hiring eight medics to staff the seventh EMS ambulance. This would require \$331,309 in funding within the 2018-2019 budget.

Mr. Shelton discussed the contract with Air-Care and using the seventh medic crew as another Quick Response Unit.

John Shelton, Emergency Services Director, discussed the Community Paramedicine Duke Endowment Grant through Northern Hospital. Mr. Shelton stated the goal is to select patients who have reoccurring visits to Northern Hospital within the first 48-hours of treatment. The hospital has agreed to seek Duke Endowment Grant funding to support personnel and equipment within EMS. The hospital has applied for \$377,000 to provide four EMS personnel and a response vehicle, equipped to assist in managing the program. Mr. Shelton stated that it could take six-months to hear from the grantor.

John Shelton, Emergency Services, discussed billing for Narcan for Opioid overdoses. Mr. Shelton stated the methods for administration within EMS is nasal and IV administration. Nasal administration is \$50.00 per dose in medication cost. Intravenous administration is \$14.00 per dose.

Dennis Bledsoe, Public Works Director, Wayne Sullivan, Engineer, and DEC Associates discussed the landfill expansion and cost of construction. Mr. Bledsoe discussed work that needs to be completed before the expansion. The expansion would be

approximately 18.2 acres. It would entail 9 acres in phase 1 and 9.2 in phase 2.

Andrew Carter, DEC Associates, discussed a solid waste debt capacity analysis and growth and revenue assumptions. Mr. Carter discussed the total amount of funds for the expansion.

Mr. Bledsoe discussed the cost of recycling per month.

The Board took a lunch break.

The Board resumed regular business.

Doug Carter, DEC Associates, stated Surry County received an S&P rating of A++ and a rating of Aa 2 from Moody's. Mr. Carter stated the rating agencies were impressed with the Board's management of the County over the past few years, following the last rating change. Mr. Carter also stated the rating agency staff was impressed with Ms. Bowen's grasp of the County's financial system and pending debt issuances since she has been in her position for only a couple of years.

Sheriff Jimmy Combs, Chief Deputy Lauren Osborne and Randy Shelton discussed the current jail inmate population and the need for a jail expansion.

Don Mitchell, Facilities Director, discussed a design plan for expansion of the jail and sheriff's offices from Mosley Architects. The plan would cost \$24 million for a new jail and \$13 million for a new sheriff's office.

There was discussion of utilizing the existing jail.

Randy Shelton stated there is a need for 236 additional beds, but he believes the plans need to include 400 beds. Mr. Shelton stated there is also a need for a new kitchen and laundry room.

Sheriff Combs discussed revenues for paying for a new jail.

There was discussion of housing federal prisoners and the corresponding requirements.

Mr. Shelton stated the County needs four additional personnel to be in compliance with Department of Health and Human Services by December 1, 2018.

The Board also discussed school security. The Board discussed placing auxiliary deputies in the schools, on a volunteer basis, to assist with school security.

The Board took a fifteen-minute break.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Phillips, the Board voted unanimously to go into closed session to discuss personnel pursuant to G.S. 143.318.11

(a)(6), economic development pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(4) and legal pursuant to G.S. 143.318.11 (a)(3).

The Board came out of closed session and resumed regular business.

The Board discussed needs of volunteer fire departments, ISO ratings, and grant availability. It was the consensus of the Board to give a grant amount up to \$50,000 to South Surry Fire Department to assist with a new substation.

Upon motion of Commissioner Phillips, seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn. The meeting ended at 5:10 p.m.

Sandra Snow
Deputy Clerk to the Board